

February 18, 2020

The Second Regular February meeting of the Danville City Council was held on February 18, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the Fourth Floor of the Municipal Building. The following Council Members were present: James B. Buckner, L.G. "Larry" Campbell Jr., Mayor Alonzo L. Jones, Dr. Gary P. Miller, Sherman M. Saunders, Fred O. Shanks, III, Adam J. Tomer, Vice Mayor J. Lee Vogler, Jr., and Madison J.R. Whittle (9). *Mr. Whittle entered the meeting at 7:16 p.m.*

Staff Members present were: City Manager Ken F. Larking, Deputy City Manager Earl B. Reynolds, Jr., City Attorney W. Clarke Whitfield Jr., and City Clerk Susan M. DeMasi.

Mayor Jones presided.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Invocation was given by Council Member L.G. "Larry" Campbell, Jr.; the Invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM VISITORS

Mayor Jones recognized Brad Perry, Pastor of Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Danville, who requested a stoplight on Route 58W and Barrett Street because of numerous car wrecks over the last few years.

Mayor Jones recognized Dr. David Self, 174 Millerton Road, Danville, who spoke about the condition of the public utilities, commented on sales, property and cigarette taxes.

Mayor Jones recognized Linda Colby, 196 Sunset Drive, who questioned regulations about trash being put in bags and then in containers. Ms. Colby noted her neighbor was not putting their trash in bags, and trash was getting in her yard.

Mayor Jones recognized Gordon Lyles, 1228 Halifax Road, who wanted to know the definition of what the City of Danville will stand for. Mr. Lyles noted he loves what has been done in the River District and stated he has announced his candidacy for City Council. Mayor Jones noted if anyone else present was running for Council, to stand and be recognized.

Mayor Jones recognized Judy Lyles, 1222 Halifax Road, who thanked the Danville Police who came to the Glenwood community to talk to residents about establishing a neighborhood watch. Ms. Lyles noted there was blight in the community, people speeding through the neighborhood and asked about having free programs for the youth

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Jones opened the floor for a Public Hearing regarding the Consent Agenda. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Danville Register & Bee* on February 18, 2020. No one present desired to be heard.

Council Member Buckner **moved** for adoption of the following Consent Agenda Items:

Approval of Minutes from Regular Council Meeting held on January 21, 2020, and Minutes from Special Work Session held on January 21, 2020. Draft copies of the minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

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Amending the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for VDOT Funds for Two Trail Extension Projects

An Ordinance entitled, Ordinance No. 2020-02.03, Presented by its First Reading on February 4, 2020, Amending the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Appropriation Ordinance for Two Trail Extension Projects to be Undertaken within the City of Danville and to be Financed Anticipating Revenues from the Virginia Department of Transportation - Transportation Alternatives Program.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Tomer and carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 9-0
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (9)
NAY: None

Mayor Jones asked City Manager Ken Larking to discuss the recent workshop held in the City. Mr. Larking stated they were very pleased that Robert David, who coordinates the gang reduction activities for the City, was able to get experts from the National Gang Center and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, in Danville for several days last week to speak with all the providers within the City who help the youth make sure they were on the right path for their future. It was training that some in the community have been able to go to when it was held in other locations. This time they came to Danville and the entire team of people, the agencies involved including education, law enforcement, probation and parole, juvenile detention, City departments and others, were able to participate. This was a proven model adopted by the City Council; staff has been working on it and have had a lot of success, and having the training here in the community last week gave providers an opportunity to see it firsthand. Mayor Jones recognized Robert David for the work he was doing in the City.

NEW BUSINESS

REVIEW OF GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Finance Michael Adkins reviewed the results of the General Fund through January 31st, seven months and about 58% into the fiscal year. Total Revenues show the City received \$58.3M at the end of January, nearly 53% of budget and usually where the City was at this point in the year. Compared to last January, it shows an increase of \$3M; some of that was due to rate increases, and also due to growth. Real Estate taxes were \$400,000 at the end of last year, related to a rate increase implemented for FY20. Personal Property taxes were \$130,000 ahead of last year, that dates back to a FY19 rate increase. The City was seeing about an \$85,000 increase in Machinery and Tools, that was natural growth in the assessed values. The collection of Delinquent Real Estate taxes was going very well, the City received about \$600,000 through the end of January; that was 63% of budget. On the Local Tax side, the biggest increase over last year was the Hotel/Motel Lodging Tax which had a rate increase for FY20. Meals Tax was about \$80,000 which was natural growth; this offsets a decrease the City was seeing in sales tax which he had mentioned in previous months. Staff did get the February installment last Friday which represented December sales. While it was much higher than previous months, it was not quite as high as last year, so the City was seeing decreases there. Staff does not get a lot of detailed information on what makes up the sales tax from the state each month. The Commissioner of Revenues' office does have access to that information; Mr. Adkins worked with him last week, he and his staff were looking into that and should be able to get some details about what the decrease was related to.

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The City saw a \$1M increase in Recoveries. The City had transitioned the Customer Service function from the Utility Funds to the General Fund; there was a recovery from the Utility funds to help pay for that cost and why it was up this year. Charges for Services were up substantially, \$400,000 over last year, related to the per diem rates charged for the jail, and the juvenile and adult detention facilities. As those costs of operations go up, the per diem cost also goes up. Other than the sales tax, all the revenue categories are on a good path for budget.

On Expenditures, the City had spent \$69M by the end of January. Department Spending was at 54.5% of budget, behind budget but where it was usually seen. The Non-Departmental Expenditures, which was primarily Group Health Insurance, was on track for budget, 58% at the end of January. Revenues do not come in evenly through the year, but expenses typically do, the City operates at a deficit for most of the fiscal year and this January was no different. The deficit at the end of seven months was about \$10.6M, about \$1.5M better than last year at this time. The City did budget a deficit of about \$2M for this year, taking that from Fund Balance; hopefully if the City stays on this path, it could break even and maybe not have to dip into fund balance. Mr. Adkins stated the City had some additional costs probably with repairs related to the recent flooding and will be monitoring that.

Mr. Shanks noted Mr. Adkins stated sales tax for December was down, how far down were they compared to last year. Mr. Adkins stated he did not have the exact amount but that the City received over \$800,000 for that month. The City has seen it as high as \$900,000 in past years, he will roughly guess it was about \$100,000 less than the City usually sees. Mr. Campbell questioned if Mr. Adkins had an estimate on the flood damages and Mr. Adkins noted they did not have that information yet. Public Works was working on that and they should have some information at a later date.

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGENCY DESIGNATION AGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN MUNICIPAL POWER

Vice Mayor Vogler **moved** for adoption of a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-02.04

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGENCY DESIGNATION SCHEDULE WITH AMERICAN MUNICIPAL POWER FOR THE DANVILLE FARM, IRISH ROAD, AND WHITMELL SOLAR FARM'S METERING AND BILLING.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Miller.

Dr. Miller noted AMP has most of the City's contracts for power and over the years, some of those contracts were very expensive, a lot of it was transmission charges. With the solar farms there was little or no transmission charges, why was the City partnering with AMP for them to meter. Council Member Shanks stated AMP was already taking care of metering for Schoolfield Hydro; it was best to have a third party involved to read the meters, do the processing of data and to keep the City from having to have additional staff.

The Motion was **carried** by the following vote:

VOTE: 9-0
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,

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NAY: Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (9)
None

APPROVAL OF THE CITY OF DANVILLE'S COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PROJECT LIST

Council Member Tomer **moved** for adoption of a Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-02.05

APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR MAINTAINING DANVILLE'S STATUS AS A REDEVELOPMENT AREA UNDER THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAM.

The Motion was **seconded** by Council Member Buckner and carried by the following vote:

VOTE: 9-0
AYE: Buckner, Campbell, Jones, Miller, Saunders,
Shanks, Tomer, Vogler and Whittle (9)
NAY: None

BUDGET AMENDMENT – CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR A GRANT FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$123,908 AND LOCAL SHARE OF \$25,208

Upon **Motion** by Vice Mayor Vogler and **second** by Council Member Buckner, an Ordinance entitled:

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-02.04

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE BY INCREASING REVENUE FOR A DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, BYRNE/JAG GRANT FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$123,908 AND LOCAL SHARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,208 FOR A TOTAL OF \$149,116 TO BE USED TO FUND THE SALARY AND BENEFITS OF A GANG PREVENTION COORDINATOR AND OTHER EXPENDITURES RELATING TO THE PROGRAM.

was presented by its **First Reading**, as required by City Charter, to lie over before final adoption.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Communications from City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Attorney or City Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Miller noted Harry Johnson recently passed away; he did not know Mr. Johnson when he was a basketball coach, but took care of him as a patient for about fifteen years. Mr.

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Johnson never came in when he wasn't joking, happy and cheering up all the people in the room. Dr. Miller noted a patient in the hospital stopped him to give kudos to the Utility Department who were out in the rain last week at 3:00 a.m. to work on the power outage. Dr. Miller encouraged citizens to get their flu shot; it was not too late.

Council Member Saunders thanked Mr. Adkins for the report on the City's finances and to the family of Coach Harry Johnson, Council was thinking about them and praying for them. Mr. Saunders noted the Mayor did a great job at the event Saturday when he spoke at Coach Johnson's Home Going Service. Also, special thanks and thoughts to the family of Ms. Emily Edmonds who did so much for the City and Region, with the Civil Rights Museum, and working all over the Country. Mr. Saunders thanked all the employees of the City of Danville.

Mayor Jones noted Mr. Saunders has been recognized as a Home Town Hero by WBTV.

Council Member Shanks noted his thanks to all the City employees, especially the Danville Utility employees, who have dealt with some unusual and difficult circumstances over the last few weeks.

Vice Mayor Vogler thanked City employees, especially with the recent storms and power outages, working in bad weather to get the power back on, and asked citizens to keep the family of Harry Johnson in their thoughts and prayers. Mr. Vogler asked the City Manager about the substation in the Westover area. Mr. Larking explained some of the substations in the City are older and staff has been working with the Utility Commission and City Council to appropriate funds to upgrade them. The City has done two total refurbishments, are in the process of two right now, and are engineering two. It was a lengthy process to refurbish an entire substation, it takes a couple years between the design and construction. The City cannot have multiple substations done at the same time without impacting the viability of power throughout the system. In the situation in Westover, that particular substation did have a pretty significant piece of infrastructure malfunction which caused it to explode, and caused some damage to another piece of infrastructure. Both of those parts had to be shipped off, evaluated, repaired and brought back in; that takes several weeks. The City had invested in some mobile substations that can be deployed pretty quickly when there was an issue. The mobile substation in place in Westover was a little more sensitive to issues that might occur such as a heavy rain situation; staff was hoping there wouldn't be any issues. Mr. Vogler noted to the citizens in the Westover community, the City appreciates their patience and understanding and thanked the City Manager for the update. With regard to the parking requirements for businesses in the City, the Planning Commission was working on this now to bring it back to City Council. He hoped the City continued to work on doing everything they can to help small businesses. Mr. Vogler noted a number of citizens have asked him recently if the City could look into the possibility of a special needs playground and asked the City Manager to look into that.

Council Member Whittle noted he went to a great event a few weeks ago at Moffett Memorial Church, done by the Danville Concert Association; they have another event coming up, the Symphony Orchestra from the Ukraine on February 20th at GWHS Auditorium.

Council Member Buckner noted he had been asked to be part of an exchange program with Loudon County with Mr. Saunders, to go to Richmond, represent the City and meet with the people from Loudon County. Mr. Buckner thanked the Mayor for that opportunity; it was a great day meeting with people throughout the State. Mr. Buckner reminded citizens that Morgan Olsen will be having a job fair on March 3-5, from 8:00 a.m. to 8 p.m., and will be hiring 1,000 people.

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Mayor Jones asked the City Manager if there was anything the City could do to assist Morgan Olsen; can the City put this information out as much as they could.

Council Member Campbell noted to the Johnson and Edmonds' families, he wanted to send out his regards to them. Mr. Campbell thanked Mr. David for his work on the gang program, it was much needed in the City.

Mayor Jones stated, at VML they had discussed the stress that public safety employees go through. The City recently lost two citizens in a fire; with all the public safety people that were there, he had called the Fire Marshall and wanted to know how the staff were doing. He was told there were counselors for the staff, and thanked the City Manager for that. With all the hard work that staff did for the City during the storm, Mayor Jones asked the City Manager to share all the hours the Utility Department and the Director had put in.

Mr. Larking noted for the outage that occurred in the Westover community, several of the crews were out there all night long; to the point where they were pushing longer than they should have, but they were dedicated to get the power back on. Philip Haley, the Director of Power and Light, and Jason Grey, Director of Utilities, were both supervising this operation until about 3:30 in the morning. They made sure people were being safe, doing what they needed to do and trying to support the people out on the poles working to get the electric power back on. Mr. Larking stated that was not unusual; the employees are dedicated to public service; the reason they do what they do was because they cared about serving the community, want to do what was best for the community and don't mind putting in the hours. His opinion and what he has observed, when the chips are down, that was when they got excited about putting in the hard work to get people back up with power. Mr. Larking stated it made him very proud to be part of the organization and a great group of people. No matter what their role was on city staff, they do care about public service, the community and serving the citizens as best they can.

Mayor Jones thanked Council Member Campbell and Saunders, he knows it meant a lot to the Johnsons, supporting their family.

The meeting adjourned at: 7:54 p.m.

APPROVED:

s/Alonzo L. Jones
MAYOR

ATTEST:

s/Susan M. DeMasi, CMC
CITY CLERK